GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:188
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
SUBMARINE CABLE LINKS
Gadhavi Shri Pushpdan Shambhudan

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the BSNL and MTNL are planning to lay submarine cable links from India to Singapore an d Malaysia and another through West Asia to be extended in other countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the cost of the project ;

(c) whether the cost of the project is four times more than the actual cost ;

(d) if so, the details thereof ;

(e) the names of consultants for the project and criteria adopted in selection of consultants ;

(f) whether BSNL/MTNL is considering alternative plans for the cable links in view of heavy cost; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. The Eastern segment has been planned from India to Malaysia and/or Singapore with branches to Bangladesh, Myanmar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Thailand and Indonesia.The Western segment has been planned from India to United Arab Emerates and/ or Saudi Arabia with branches to Pakistan, Oman, Iran, Qatar and Kuwait. As per the Preliminary estimates worked out by M/s Datawave Ltd, the Phase-I consultant to examine feasibility/viability of the project and Return on Investment, the estimated cost of the project is US $ 400 million excluding terminal build etc.

(c)to(g) M/s Datawave Ltd. of United Kingdom was appointed as Phase-I consultant to examine feasibility/viability of the project and Return on Investment. M/s Axiom of France has been appointed as Phase-II consultant for providing assistance to MTL team till the completion of the project. Both these consultants have been selected through open global bidding process.

The above preliminary cost is only an estimate and shall be firmed up after tenders are finalized. However, the possibility of a land route to Singapore via Myanmar is also being explored.